PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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Justice for Darius

BUILD AN ANTIRACIST WORLD WITH COMMUNISM

DISARM and DEFUND THE POLICE
We Love You Darius!
DARIUS WASHINGTON!!
IT IS OUR DUTY TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
IT IS OUR DUTY TO WIN
THE WHOLE SYSTEM IS GUILTY

To abolish kkkops and racist terror, we need nothing short of a communist revolution.

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, September 16—Workers around the world are continuing to show their power to fight back against the terrors of capitalism using anti-racist class unity. The murder-by-cop of George Floyd made racism an undeniable deadly reality for some. The complete lack of justice for Breonna Taylor's death by the Louisville police and authorities shows how broken the justice system is. Many more, particularly Black workers, saw this as an ongoing pattern of torture by kkkops and their bosses.

The international communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) has helped build the fight around the murder-by-cop of Darius Washington, a Black worker in Chicago Heights, IL (See CHALLENGE, 8/7). Shot over 14 times, Darius' friends and family took to the streets to expose the murder. Workers in the area banded together and demanded the attention of local authorities. PLP stood with our class from that first night of protest and continue in that fight now.

Tonight, we organized with workers in the community to continue that struggle. We demanded an end to ruling class terror, answers about our brother Darius' murder, and PL'ers called for workers to join our Party in the fight to build a communist society -- the only solution for finally ending these ruling class murders!

Killer kkkapitalists, you can't hide!

As local bosses have shut out the community with no answers about his murder, workers in the city, those close to Darius and PLP members, planned to take the fight to the local city council meeting.

PL'ers shared our line about how these ruling class mouthpieces have no intention of giving answers or holding back their goons. We all agreed that no one was under the delusion that these kkkops or politrickcians were truthful. We also agreed that our class had to unite in action, in addition to words, to hold these fascists accountable.

The Black worker-led, multiracial team planning this action proved that ruling class abuses have nothing on working class unity. Despite the lies of racism and sexism used to divide us, we knew that more banded us together as workers. PLP members talked about how capitalist borders do not protect anyone from abuses by cops or capitalists. From schools designed to fail to the for-profit neglect of neighborhoods, these were more reasons why we must fight our class enemies

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OUR FIGHT

☆Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

☆The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

☆Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

☆While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

☆Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

☆Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

☆Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

☆Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☆Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

☆Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Moria fire set by capitalism

On September 9, a fire destroyed the squalid Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece, the largest migrant worker concentration camp in Europe. Moria crammed 13,000 women, men, and children into space built for 3,000. While it's still unclear who set the blaze, we know that workers boldly organized against their deplorable living conditions and were targeted by fascist crackdowns. These displaced members of the international working class are fleeing famine and war. While their plight is extreme, they represent hundreds of millions of workers whose lives have been upended by intensifying inter-imperialist rivalry and a worldwide crisis of capitalism.

As the U.S.-led liberal world order crumbles amid the chaos of a global pandemic, an ascendant China and resurgent Russia are making inroads with regional capitalist bosses in countries like Greece and Turkey. Migrant workers—the most vulnerable members of our class—have long been pawns in this brutal profit system game. But they are also learning to struggle and fight back! Progressive Labor Party (PLP) stands in solidarity with the refugees who are leading the fight against the rulers' vicious racism and rising fascism. United, workers cannot be defeated!

We are not animals, we are workers

Even before the recent fire, life at the Moria camp was unbearable. Acute overcrowding, a disgraceful lack of health care, and an absence of clean water or sanitation made the site a ticking time bomb for Covid-19 (Human Rights Watch, 2020). A single poorly supplied emergency medical provider was assigned to care for a camp population that swelled to more than 20,000 earlier this year. As the Guardian painted the appalling scene last winter: "Thousands of vulnerable workers sleep in makeshift tents elevated on wooden pallets to try to prevent the cold from the freezing ground seeping into their bodies. The unlucky ones, with no pallets, include a four-day-old baby. The refugees, 40 percent of them children, confront violent stabbings, outbreaks of meningitis, giving birth without proper care, extreme panic attacks, PTSD hallucinations and flashbacks, sleep disturbances, and sexual violence" (2/9).

A mental health care worker for Doctors Without Borders told of the appalling toll these conditions took on children at Moria: "They stop playing. Sometimes they stop communicating and they look at the ground. They refuse to talk" (Atlantic, 11/2019). Some became so traumatized that they began cutting themselves.

Leading up to the fire, the many demonstrations were met by racist suppression by Greek police and violent right-wing forces. Earlier this year, racist vigilantes attempted to burn down a coronavirus facility used to treat workers at the camp (Doctors Without Borders, 2020). Though the anti-immigrant racists would be logical suspects in the September 9 fire, the kkkops have charged four refugees with arson.

After being moved to a hastily constructed campsite, more than 200 migrant workers in Lesbos have tested positive for the coronavirus, a number expected to balloon in coming weeks (infomigrants.net, 9/22). Zekria Farzad, a 40-year-old worker from Afghanistan, said, "We are living like animals….Actually, we are struggling to be alive" (Washington Post, 2/23).

Migration crisis driven by imploding liberal world order

Refugees are created by capitalism. Most of the concentration camp inmates in Moria came from Afghanistan, Syria, or Somalia, countries in the crosshairs of the imperialists' struggle for control over oil in Central Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa. Energy is a critical source of profits for the big capitalist bosses. Even more important, oil will be needed for the inevitable war between the U.S. and its challengers for global supremacy.

Afghanistan has been gripped by decades of inter-imperialist conflict between the United States, the Soviet Union (now Russia), and China, with regional powers like Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia also adding to the instability. According to the Brown University Costs of War project, 2.4 million workers fled Afghanistan between 2012 and 2019, "the largest refugee population in the world." Large numbers were admitted by Iran, but the coronavirus pandemic and a U.S. maximum pressure campaign shut that door. After a deal between the European Union and Turkey broke down, thousands of desperate migrant workers were forced to seek refuge in Greece.

In Syria, meanwhile, Russia has kept in power its war criminal proxy, President Bashar al-Assad, while regaining a strategic naval base in Tartus. After eight years of civil war that followed the CIA-backed Arab Spring revolts, "more than half of Syria's pre-war population has been displaced, totaling some 13.3 million people" (Brown University). Cross-border refugees surged with the rise of U.S.-funded militias that have murdered and mutilated their way across Kurdish-controlled areas (The Intercept, October, 2019). Many of these refugees found their way to Moria.

Somalia sits near the strategic Strait of Bab el-Mandeb, where four million barrels of oil pass each day. Under Bomber in Chief Barack Obama, the U.S. rained carnage on the country, murdering and displacing masses of workers. Under mass murderer Donald Trump, these bombing campaigns have continued to slaughter and terrorize civilians. By the end of 2019, "approximately 4.2 million Somalis had been displaced within the country (3.4 million) or beyond its borders as refugees or asylum seekers (800,000)" (Brown University). With China establishing its first overseas military base in neighboring Djibouti, the U.S. bosses have ample incentive to continue to sow death and destruction.

Workers of the world, unite!

As the imperialist powers sharpen their knives to prepare for global war, more and more workers will be killed or displaced. There are no good bosses! Choosing between the U.S., China, Russia, or their puppets is a lose-lose proposition. The international working class must stand in solidarity, like the workers in Mexico who provided food and shelter for Central American migrants. Or like the workers in Germany who took to the streets to declare, "We have space!", in opposition to government and fascist forces claiming otherwise (Ruptly.tv/en, 9/20). Our Party's mission is to fight alongside these advanced workers and to inject the communist politics that will liberate our entire class from the deadly stranglehold of imperialism.

Communist revolution will smash all borders, the arbitrary lines that divide workers and set off the bosses' wars. The international working class knows no borders! Fight for communism! Join PLP!✪

Kick capitalism to the curb

Smash racist homelessness & inequality

Homelessness will exist as long as the profit system exists. PLP fights for communism, a world free of racist housing and homelessness. Join us!

NEW YORK CITY, September 13—The power of the recent antiracist rebellions has spread to the mostly white, Upper West Side (UWS) of Manhattan, emerging in a fight over homelessness, racism and inequality. Antiracists are fighting against the displacement of homeless workers from overcrowded shelters into empty hotels so they can physically distance during the Covid-19 crisis, which has emptied the hotels in the first place.

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends on the UWS have been involved in this fight from the beginning, involving our co-workers, union members and friends from other organizations, while making new friends.

Homelessness is an integral part of the racist, capitalist, profit system. Hospitals and schools are understaffed, but homeless workers can't find jobs. There is no profit to be made.

Roads, bridges and mass transit need massive upgrades, but there is no money, as the billionaire capitalists are getting richer. And many homeless workers are working, but can't make enough to pay the exorbitant rents.

We are struggling with our friends and neighbors to see it's not just Donald Trump to blame for this racist system; we need a communist revolution to get rid of this racist capitalist nightmare once and for all.

Racist homelessness by the numbers

- Approximately 57 percent of heads of household in shelters are Black, 32 percent are Latin.
- In May 2020, there were 13,523 homeless families with 20,044 homeless children in the New York City shelter system. Families make up more than two-thirds of the homeless shelter population.
- During the 2019 fiscal year, 132,660 different homeless people slept in the City shelter system, including over 44,300 children.
- The number of homeless people sleeping in shelters is now 61 percent higher than it was 10 years ago. The number of homeless single adults is 133 percent higher than it was 10 years ago.
- The primary cause of homelessness, especially among families, is lack of affordable housing. That's a symptom of capitalism.
- Every night, thousands of unsheltered, unhoused people sleep on the streets, in the subway and in other public spaces.
- Studies show that the large majority of homeless people are living with mental illness or other severe health problems. (coalitionforthehomeless.org).

Racists organize against the homeless

At the end of July, the NYC Department of Human Services (DHS) moved 270 homeless men into the Lucerne Hotel on Amsterdam Ave. There are about 700 homeless workers in four UWS hotels, and thousands more in 60 hotels around the city.

Following this decision, a racist movement, spearheaded by former Mayor and Trump-lackey Rudy Ghouliani and his former deputy Randy Mastro, organized UWS for Safer Streets (SS) to have the men evicted from the Lucerne.

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Build an antiracist world with communism

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together.

United in the fight for justice

The action started across the street from the Chicago Heights police station. Workers gathered for a reading of a statement of demands for justice; a call for the transparency and restructuring of cops and accountability to the family and community of Darius Washington.

We in PLP believe workers should demand justice, but not because we are under any delusion that they will be met. The demands show the dividing line between the interests of workers and the power-hungry ruling class. They represent what we know our class deserves: lives free from deadly inequalities and abuses that have and will always exist under capitalism.

Workers from the area spoke about long-standing abuses by cops. One person detailed her experiences starting in high school. Intimidation and assault by cops in schools with mostly Black, Latin and working class students that have continued to the present day. Others from neighboring cities spoke about the need to stand in solidarity in this fight.

We continued that sharing while we marched and chanted through the streets, "We demand justice, we demand answers!" and "The cops, the courts, the ku klux klan -- all are a part of the bosses plan!" rang out and drew attention and support from people driving and walking past.

After arriving at city hall, we found that the cowardly city administrators cancelled the council meeting rather than face those they claim to represent. Our group was met by kkkops who were combative, issued verbal threats, and attempted to waste our time. The justifiably irritated crowd drowned them out with chants of "Who shot Darius?!" After occupying the area and holding these capitalist watchdogs accountable for their abuses, the crowd called their bluff. We marched to a busy highway and shut it down.

When workers arrived back at the cop station, some banged on the windows of the building, fearlessly demanding accountability for the oppression of their communities. This prompted a standoff between workers and the cops that ended with them making more empty promises about details of Darius' murder. They may think they were getting themselves off the hook, but our group of multiracial fighters have no plan to ease off the pressure.

Front line lessons of class struggle

This action showed that members of the working class in Chicago Heights and surrounding areas absolutely have power. Life under capitalism purposefully drives workers to many destructive vices and methods of survival. Despite this reality, when our class unites in fightback, all that can be overcome. For PLP, continuing to build lasting relationships with other workers and pushing the limits of our political education and action is what it means to do this work.

A PL member at the action said that our class can never trust the system to correct itself. A less racist, sexist, murderous version of capitalism does not exist; nothing short of a worker-led communist revolution will free us. This is our Party's message to workers and students and what we build toward. Nothing short of smashing capitalism and fighting for communism will win freedom for our class. We need all workers and students to join us! ✪

From Indiana to Kenosha

Smash racist state terror

INDIANA, August 31 – The ongoing kkkop terrorism that is essential to capitalism has been met around the country with intense antiracist, multiracial fightback. Even when faced with armed gutter racist militias in league with killer cops, workers in areas like Kenosha, Portland and Minnesota stood strong in solidarity.

Unfortunately, some workers have paid with their lives. Members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and four other local social justice organizations joined to host this protest rally and march today in support of growing anti-racist and anti-fascist fights.

Building the fight for communism means showing workers what we fight for. It's necessary that we stand with workers in mass organizations who want to fight against capitalist inequality. We also must build genuine, personal relationships with other workers, share our politics as the alternative to voting and pacifism, and win dedicated fighters to our Party.

Making fightback primary

Approximately 85 workers gathered on the rally day with very short notice, proving that antiracism and antifascism are more present among our class than the capitalist media would have us believe. Despite the most recent murders and attacks by cops across the country, multiracial groups of workers have continued to press forward in the face of politically-sanctioned state terror. The organizers are no strangers to standing up and fighting back in the face of growing oppression.

A point of unity in all comments by speakers was the urge to continue to fight back against the bosses' attacks and the gains made from fighting racism and sexism in unity with each other. A speaker from an anti-racist group tied Black workers' fight to the long-term fight of all against injustice in this country. She encouraged workers to continue in this struggle and expressed hope that it will be won.

These views were shared by the family of Jamal Williams, as they spoke about their unwavering fight for justice. Jamal was killed by former cops who were security guards at Community Hospital in Indiana, where he admitted himself due to a mental health crisis. Jamal's parents recounted that the guards attacked him, and responded to his self-defense with fatal gunshots. Even in our times of most need, in places where we're supposed to get treatment, our class is met with bullets. As a Party, we stress that these abuses are not exceptions; they are standard operating procedures under this capitalist system. Jamal's family, with support of the Party and many other workers in the area, has been leading consistent actions in front of the hospital, demanding justice and policy changes.

From the front lines of Kenosha

A PL'er who traveled twice to Kenosha with other Party members to join workers in militant struggles spoke about how PLP's role has always been to join with workers fighting back, wherever they are.

He gave this message of empowerment that comrades got from their experiences: "I think Kenosha, like Chicago, like Northwest Indiana, Baltimore, like Watts in the 1960s, all these different things are showing us what we

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The $5 TRILLION swindle of workers' Social Security

The "debate" over the Social Security's (SS) "crisis" is a cover for a trillion-dollar looting of the SS Trust Fund, pulled off for over 52 years by every Democratic and Republican president who has occupied the White House — Johnson, Carter, Clinton, Obama, Nixon, Reagan, the two Bushes, and now Trump. It's a crisis, not of SS but one of U.S. capitalism, mired in a multi-trillion debt resulting from illegally spending the workers' SS surpluses to finance U.S. imperialism's wars against Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Iraq and Afghanistan. It mirrors a general law of the profit system: shift the bosses' financial burdens onto the backs of the working class.

Back in 1968, when the U.S. invasion of Vietnam was in high gear, the Johnson administration's war expenditures were spinning the Federal budget into bottomless debt. Since the SS Trust Fund was running a surplus — its income from payroll taxes deducted from workers' paychecks was exceeding the pensions paid out to retirees — the Johnson gang used a shrewd maneuver to "balance the budget": "fold" this SS surplus into a newly labeled "Unified Federal Budget." This violated the bosses' law banning use of SS Trust Fund money for purposes other than SS.

By this sleight-of-hand, Johnson could announce a federal government "surplus," masking the deficit in federal spending generated by the enormous expenses of the Vietnam War. To avoid the appearance of stealing the SS Trust Fund's surplus, the government gave the SS Trust Fund U.S. Treasury notes equal to it's "loan" from the Fund, promising to pay back the loan with interest. This meant that the SS surpluses — now part of this Unified Federal Budget — could be used to pay for all federal government costs, "for everything from jet fighters to thumb tacks" (NY Times, 1/21/90), especially for the proliferating "forever" wars. These wars resulted in mounting federal deficits, laying the basis for an enormous debt to pay back the trillions "loaned" from the SS Fund: "Over the second and third decades of the 21st century, Congress will have to appropriate a total of $5 trillion for Social Security," NY Times, 1/31/95), a crisis indeed, composed of SS surpluses paid into the SS Fund by — and stolen from — the working class.

This U.S. bosses' deficit crisis is part of the general crisis of capitalism. They will always try to solve that crisis on the backs of workers, who produce all the value in society. Such "solutions" will continue until the working class, led by its revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party, rises up to destroy the ruling class's state power and establishes a society in which retired workers will be provided for by the social value produced by our entire class. Bosses, profits and imperialist wars will be buried forever.

In the 1980s, the Reagan gang executed a neat maneuver to shift still more of the tax burden onto the working class. It raised the payroll taxes into Social Security 23 percent while lowering the top income tax rate benefiting the rich from 70 percent down to 28 percent, and lowering corporate income taxes by 23 percent. Presumably workers and bosses each pay 7.65 percent of their payrolls into the Social Security Trust Fund. However, the bosses' share comes out of their profit from the workers' labors, so actually workers are really saddled with the entire 15.3 percent. The combination of these increases on workers and decreases on the bosses meant, "The burden of taxation was shifted from the income tax to the Social Security tax.... [so 75 percent] of all Americans now pay more in Social Security taxes than they do in income taxes....[Therefore] the expenses of government are financed more by a tax on the poor and the middle class and less by a tax on the wealthy" (NY Times, 1/21/90). Thus, the Social Security surpluses stolen by the bosses in the Unified Federal Budget [see main article] wreaked still further havoc on the working class.✪

Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Toward a revolutionary theory of education

Just as the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were distorted so that their advocacy of violent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat was ignored by social democrats who advocated a peaceful transition to socialism through a combination of reform demands and elections, so too have bourgeois educational theorists around the world ignored and sidestepped the communist message contained in Paolo Freire's book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

The word pedagogy means the theory and practice of education. It literally means to walk around teaching people, and it comes from the practice of the Greek philosopher Socrates who walked around the city of Athens gathering students around him and questioning the legitimacy of the government by use of the dialectical method of questioning. Socrates was forced by the Athenian ruling class to commit suicide, which he did rather than renounce the truths that he and his students had discovered.

Marx famously proclaimed that the purpose of philosophy is not merely to understand the world but to change it. It logically follows that the purpose of education is not merely to understand the world but to change the world by means of revealing the oppressive nature of capitalism, then taking action by mass revolutionary violence led by the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) to establish the dictatorship of the working class.

This is the program which is also supported by Paolo Freire, but which has been ignored by his bourgeois academic "interpreters." To gain a further understanding of Freire's educational theories, which were first proposed a little over 50 years ago, let us first examine Paolo Freire's life and the historical times in which he lived and practiced education of workers and peasants.

Dialectical and historical materialism in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Paolo Freire was born into a "middle-class" family in Brazil in the 1930's but his family lost everything during the great crisis of capitalism that enveloped the world at that time, and which led to the rise of fascism. His family moved into the most neglected and working-class neighborhood in Recife, Brazil, where Freire experienced the extremes of poverty, hunger and oppression first-hand. His playmates were other working-class children. He managed to obtain an education in the bourgeois sense, but he never forgot the lessons that experience taught him about the violence of capitalism against workers. Coming of intellectual age in the 1950's Freire was influenced by the writings of Marx, Engels and Vladimir Lenin. He was also influenced by the writings of the existentialist philosophers, Jean-Paul Sartre, Frantz Fanon, Simone De Beauvoir and Erich Fromm who were capitalist critics acceptable to the bosses. In 1964 Freire was imprisoned by the fascist government of Brazil, and ultimately went into exile in the U.S.

Freire's writings can be used in a reformist way, or in a revolutionary way, and a reading of his book shows that his main intent was revolutionary, communist, and in support of a mass movement to overthrow capitalist oppression, as we shall now discuss.

The revolutionary aspect of Freire's theory of education

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed does not explicitly call for the organization of a vanguard revolutionary communist party to violently overthrow capitalism and establish the dictatorship of the working class. But the book, over the course of four chapters does, in fact, advocate these Marxist-Leninist precepts. Further, Freire cites by name, usually in footnotes, the revolutionaries from whom he derives these educational theories. He quotes from Marx, Engles, Lenin, Che Guevara, and Mao Tse Tung whenever he makes a critical main point in a theory. He endorses base building, the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the workers, and the need for what he describes as "revolutionary leaders."

Freire advocates a dialogue, a dialectical conversation, between revolutionary leaders and the masses. This must be a discussion among comrades, where there is a dual aspect involved. The teacher is a student of the people, and the people are students of the teacher. Teachers/Revolutionary Leaders and students reciprocally learn and teach. Freire is critical of the bourgeois "banking" concept of education in which students passively memorize and repeat back to the teacher what the teacher authority tells them. Naturally, it is somewhat clear that in the public and private schools of any capitalist country that information is conveyed laden with a poisonous dose of ruling class ideology. Thus, Freire warned teachers, at that time many of whom were volunteers in literacy programs in Latin America, that teaching workers to read was not enough.

The students had to be taught to think for themselves by means of mastering critical thinking which Freire expressly states is to master the philosophy of dialectical materialism. The combination of learning to read with dialectical materialism, then putting this combination into practice to overthrow the oppressor is the core of Freire's educational philosophy. Further, by emphasizing that revolutionary leaders and workers are comrades, Freire offers a method to avoid revisionism by empowering millions to understand and apply dialectical materialism to the experience of class oppression. This jibes with the Progressive Labor Party's theory of the need for a mass party of millions of workers internationally to make revolution.

Bourgeois academicians, anarchists, and phony liberals talk about how great the book is and how it influenced them, but, in the end, they are all opportunists and apologists for capitalism. Not one calls for communist revolution, which is the real intent of the book.

When Jean Paul Sartre renounced existentialism, the philosophy he had developed over 40 years (and advocated communism), the bosses stopped teaching it. New ruling-class theories such as structuralism, semiotics, identity politics, and so forth came into vogue. Freire's theories are far to the left of these, but the fact that Freire's advocacy of communism is subtle means that he can easily be misinterpreted and used by the intellectual lackeys of the bosses in fake attacks on the status quo. Nevertheless, because Freire has a class analysis and advocates dialectical materialism, he can still be useful in ideological struggles in a university setting by PLP members in discussions with students and teachers who are seeking the truth in good faith. ✪

Existentialism: a dead-end capitalist ideology

Many of the existentialists that influenced Freire had been part of the anti-fascist, underground movement, especially in France. However, primarily due to their own individualism they did not join the communist parties of their countries, but rather viewed themselves as friendly critics of communism. The existentialists, who influenced Freire, were viewed by the bosses as dangerous on one level because of their critique of bourgeois ideology, but ultimately as a "safer" third route between communism and capitalism, because the alienated middle class intellectuals to whom they appealed would not necessarily join an organized communist party because of their individualist response to capitalist culture and its lies.

However, just as many of the Bohemian students in 1848 and 1871 in France became ardent revolutionaries and joined left wing parties and groups, so too by the revolutionary year of 1968, many Bohemian students around the world, decided to join communist parties, such as the PLP, and to participate in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in the U.S., and in the French Worker Student Revolt of 1968.

Jean Paul Sartre, the primary philosopher of SDS, went from being a university teacher in the 1930's, to an underground activist in the 1940's, to a pro-communist critic in the 1950's, to a street vendor of a Maoist newspaper in 1968. At the end of his life Sartre pronounced that existentialism was ultimately a dead end, and that only communist revolution could liberate society. Interestingly, Sartre sent a letter of support for the PLP during the Harlem rebellion. Yet, it is not believed that Sartre ever joined a communist party. And it is not known whether or not Freire ever joined a communist party.

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Worcester workers defy liberal misleaders

Just days after protesters, Jo Jo Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber, were shot by racist attackers in Kenosha, more than 100 people in Worcester, MA continued the international fightback to smash this racist, capitalist system. Gathering in front of City Hall, Progressive Labor Party (PLP) helped organize the demonstration in outrage against the police shooting of Jacob Blake and so many other Black and Latin workers. This was the sixth antiracist Black Lives Matter protest here since the upsurge in May. .

Protesters made calls to end systemic racism and smash years of racist policing. Local politicians attempted to co-opt the group's anger. These elected officials are wolves in sheep's clothing. These pandering attempts to suppress worker outrage are liberal crumbs that misleaders will sprinkle at the feet of revolutionaries to try and distract us from our power as an organized, international working class - the type of fightback they fear most. They know police review boards are a sham but continue to use reformist handouts to divert workers from fighting to end capitalism, a system where economic and social disparities are the norm. They don't want workers calling for communism—a society based on the principles of "to each according to need and from each according to ability."

The protest came in the wake of a recent meeting at the Worcester Board of Health, where workers confronted local Police Chief Steve Sargent about reforming policing in Worcester (Worcester Telegram, 8/30). Lying pig Sargent suggested that he hadn't seen, nor experienced any forms of racism in his department and denied the need for review boards because his cops are not racist.

There's no such thing as an antiracist police force. As the bosses' gestapo, they are trained to murder Black and Latin men and women at any cost to protect capitalism. For years, our working-class brothers and sisters have mourned too many of our own at the hands of racists murders—we call bullsh*t on Sargent—any kkkop is a racist kkkop.

The other political conflict involved nationalist divisions. Under PLP's political leadership, however, the protest resisted these divisive tendencies drawing on the lessons of working-class struggles of the past, knowing that we are strongest when our fightbacks are multiracial and antisexist. Worker after worker expressed their disappointment in local misleaders who aligned with the bosses. You're either for and with the working class or you're against us!

Many of these protesters, activated over the past five months, have moved to the left and lost trust in the bosses, their liberal mouthpieces, and their institutions. We will continue to organize these actions, sell CHALLENGE and invite friends, co-workers, and comrades to future study groups. We will not stop fighting back until an international, worker-led revolution is won.

★★★★★

Union tries to divide workers, exposes lackey nature

The University of Illinois Hospital workers in Chicago are on strike for better working conditions, better nurse to patient ratios, and higher pay. The bosses went to court to reduce the number of strikers, pleading that patient safety would be compromised if all the workers were to go out. The unions involved represent 4,000 clerical workers and clinical staff, as well as 1400 nurses.

The nurse's union (INA) agreed to a seven-day strike, while the remaining union (SEIU) is continuing the strike. At a rally today about 200 picketers demanded that the bosses meet the worker's demands. I met a biology lab worker who said his boss makes $250,000 per year, but he and his co-workers have not gotten a pay raise in five years. Meanwhile the lab gets millions of dollars from the government.

We distributed over 150 CHALLENGEs and had conversations about the union's tactics. Workers were critical of the INA for agreeing to a seven-day strike, which divides the worker's strength, and lessens pressure on the hospital bosses to negotiate. All the while, the bosses have been using out-of-state scabs, paying them premiums (as high as $3000/week). This division of workers (between higher-paid nurses and lower-paid workers) helps the bosses' control and oppress all workers.

The unions rallied at the Democratic governor's office, demanding that he support the strikers' demands. The SEIU & INA unions supported the billionaire governor during his election. He has failed to support the workers' demands, and has not done anything to prevent the closing of Mercy Hospital, a 300-bed hospital serving a mostly Black working-class neighborhood in Chicago. Relying on politicians to help workers is a dead end. They represent the interests of the bosses and mislead us with passivity and voting.

Historically, when unions were led by communists, like the UAW, IBEW, and CIO, a strike meant that a workplace was shut down, and no one was allowed to cross a picket line. Production and profits were at a halt. As long as the bosses continue operating a hospital and university, in spite of a strike, they are less inclined to agree to the worker's demands.

Nowadays, union leaders are like politicians. They want workers to have faith that the capitalist system will work, in spite of some weaknesses. Instead of organizing their members to "shut it down," they want workers to vote. But we learned from the old red unions that anything the bosses give can be taken back.

★★★★★

Smash racist homelessness and inequality

Continued from page 3

They are using racist hysteria to prepare for an openly racist campaign for mayor next year. They raised $100,000 from rich condo owners and landlords and threatened to sue the City (NYC) to have the men removed. Main wing media ran clips of homeless workers living on the streets to bolster the false claims of the SS, even as some Lucerne residents were going to work every day.

Mayor de Blasio caved and ordered the men be kicked-out , setting off a chain reaction of displacements from shelters, including disabled homeless people at the Harmonium Hotel, with the threatened firing of all of their aid workers.

Beat back the racists fight for communism

But an antiracist movement is fighting back. The UWS Open Hearts Initiative has held weekly vigils at the hotel, including sleeping on the sidewalk, and collecting food, clothing and other supplies. A series of rallies and marches, including one to Gracie Mansion last week, forced de Blasio to reverse his cruel order and halt the move for now.

Unfortunately, the Open Hearts group has welcomed two Democratic mayoral candidates, City Council members and others into the leadership of this struggle. But we don't need more politicians. Democratic's Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio have ruled over the epicenter of racist inequality, which is New York. More than 24,000 New Yorkers have died of Covid-19, mostly working-class, Black, Latin and the elderly, including hundreds of transit and healthcare workers. With more than a million New Yorkers out of work and untold thousands of families facing evictions, homelessness is about to spike far beyond the current horrific level of 60,000.

At the same time, the number of billionaires in NY State actually grew to 118, and they have increased their wealth by billions since the onset of the pandemic. Wall St. sits at the tip of Manhattan but might as well be on Mars, as the billions they rake in are unreachable and untouchable by the masses.

The politicians will use this struggle to steer workers into the voting booths. Instead we need to fight for more housing now and dedicate ourselves to a lifelong fight for communism where workers run society.

This fight against racist inequality and homelessness will help pave the road to communist revolution, where the working class rules.✪

Virus of capitalism destroys workers' health

Continued from page 8

On top of it all, union bosses encourage us to vote for our next round of oppressors. Did the workers at Mercy get to vote about closing the hospital? Hell no! We can't vote away racism, sexism, unemployment or climate destruction – we need to organize a mass PLP to crush all these capitalist ills with revolution.

A healthy society is a communist society

Some of the most radical and widespread improvements in workers' health occurred after communist-led revolutions. In the Soviet Union, workers were able to wipe out a typhus epidemic through mass public health education, all while fighting a civil war with the capitalists. Workers in revolutionary China were able to double life expectancy in a generation by organizing "barefoot" doctors to travel to rural areas and provide basic medical services.

Learning from revolutionary history, we can and will do even better when workers take power again. Communism means health for the international working class! Join PLP!✪

Smash racist state terror

Continued from page 4

need to do when this system attacks us and that is we have to fight back. We can't rely on politicians; we know whose side they're on. We know how many people Obama deported. We know how he was silent when Black folks were getting killed under his administration. So we gotta understand that these politicians, no matter how many promises they give us or what they say, they will never fight for us, they will never stand up for us.

Only we can do that." The PL'er noted that a key similarity between protests in Kenosha, Minneapolis, and various other places is multiracial working class solidarity. A unity among workers of different identities, areas and nationalities fighting back against this brutal system.

Workers not relying on politicians to save them, but each other, and realizing that no amount of voting or praying will stop these attacks; only smashing this capitalist system will free us.

Building our Party to smash the bosses

After these action-inspiring speakers, the Party rallied workers to take the fight directly to cops in the area. Those who were able joined us in a march to the local cop department, chanting loudly, "The workers fight, the workers win!" announcing our united presence. Throughout the event, PL'ers spoke about why it is necessary for revolution to be the goal of the activism we're seeing now.

We pressed that the ongoing cycle of the liberal reform will never win freedom for our class from this capitalist hell. Only an international communist Party, led by masses of workers and guided by revolutionary politics, can do that.

Our Party pushes to build lasting relationships with workers who are willing to fight. Being involved with mass movements is an important part of that, as is building lasting relationships, and being upfront about PLP, our line, and our desire to have these brave fighters join us in the fight for revolution. ✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Racism sends Black workers to an early grave.

NYT, 8/26 — …How deeply racism is embedded in the day-to-day lives of Black people….an epidemic shows…what's been going on for hundreds of years:….the systematic neglect of Black Americans' health. In 2018, Black people died at higher age-adjusted rates than white people….

"Health inequities have literally killed thousands and thousands of Black people who would not have died if they had the death rates of white people," said Dorothy Robbins, a professor…[of] law and sociology at the University of Pennsylvania.

…In 2018, they would have avoided 65,000 premature excess deaths — the equivalent of three coach buses filled with Black people crashing and killing them all every day of the year.

…Black people have lower life expectancies than their white counterparts….at each income and education level,…the result of "profoundly embedded structural factors." [American Public Health Association]

…The origins of Black health disparities… [reach] back to the slave traders….At least half of the Africans…captured and brought to America died before they could be sold as slaves.

…The segregation that is keeping the Black death rate separate and unequal begins…at the turn of the twentieth century.

More than a million Black people migrated from the South to Northern cities…[and] were forced to rent third-rate housing that lacked clean water and sewer lines….caus[ing] Black city dwellers to die from tuberculosis and the flu at about twice the rate of white people between 1910 and 1935…. [which] correlate with…Black "house infection" a hundred years before….

Black people…were often prevented from leaving increasingly overcrowded neighborhoods. A 1911 law in Baltimore was the first of many across the country to make it illegal for Black people to relocate to blocks where more than half the residents were white….

…In Chicago, a Black home was bombed every month between 1917 and 1921….

Barred from white-only hospitals and medical schools, Black people….fought for sanitation systems and organized health education weeks…. Black people continue to work jobs that limit their ability to quarantine;…account for 12 percent of workers overall, but 17 percent of front-line workers;…are twice as likely as white renters to live in a household with more than two people per bedroom; live closer to environmental hazards;….are exposed to almost twice as much air pollution as white people;…are twice as likely to be uninsured as white people….

But if nothing changes,….Black women will still be three times as likely to die from childbirth. And Black infants will still…live three fewer years than white babies.

"We have to tell the truth," Dr. [Pearson, public policy professor, Duke University] said. "This country isn't fair and never has been. [Without]… major wholesale changes, it won't be in the future." [Ed. note: communist revolution necessary]

U.S A-Bomb project: a genoicdal horror

NYT, 8/30, A-Bomb Story Book Reviews — ["Fallout, The Hiroshima Cover-up"; Blume]

…When word of widespread radiation sickness began to circulate….in late August 1945, The New York Times ran a United Press dispatch from Hiroshima, but only after deleting nearly all references to radiation poisoning…assert[ing] that victims were succumbing solely to…injuries that one would expect from a conventional bombing. An… editorial note stated, "United States scientists say the atomic bomb will not have any lingering aftereffects in the devastated area."

….The U.S. army officer who had directed the atomic bomb program, Lt. Gen. Leslie Groves ….testified before a Senate committee…claiming that radiation poisoning "is a very pleasant way to die."

….What altered the course of history was the acquisition of nuclear weapons by… — particularly the Soviet Union in 1948 — and the certainty of retaliation should ever a nuclear weapon be used again. Were it not for that threat it seems likely that the United States would have struck again against other foes…— North Korea, Russia, China, North Vietnam, Cuba, somewhere in the Middle East — despite the suffering described…in Hershey's "Hiroshima."

["Atomic Doctors: Conscience and Complicity"] — [When] the grandson of James Nolan, chief of the military hospital at Los Alamos [New Mexico]….warned Gen. Leslie Groves…about the possibility of contamination by radioactive fallout, Groves tartly responded, "What are you, some kind of Hearst propagandist?"

…[In a test] in July 1945…the first nuclear detonation in history…proved more powerful than predicted, blowing…radioactive ash across southcentral New Mexico; [spreading over] a dozen female summer campers…about 50 miles northeast of ground zero….Only two lived past the age of 30, with the rest taken by cancer.

After the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki,…Dr. Nolan…[and] military officials… saw…Japanese [people]…suffering from fever, diarrhea, nausea, destruction of bone marrow and lesions in the mouth, colon and rectum….When Groves was asked by a Senate committee about radioactive residue…he testified: "There is none."

Some Manhattan Project doctors…went along with the lie…and experimented on human beings. The first person subjected to this was a 53-year-old Black construction worker…named Ebb Cade…. Reminiscent of the notorious Tuskegee syphilis experiment, doctors injected Cade with 4.7 micrograms of plutonium without his knowledge or consent.

…The American nuclear enterprise was a reckless operation…using secrecy to hide uncomfortable facts and evade accountability.

Racism's sweltering legacy: Black, Latin neighborhoods 20 degrees hotter

NYT, 9/3 — …Neighborhoods that are lower-income and have more Black or Hispanic residents can be up to 20 degrees Fahrenheit hotter in summer, with far fewer trees and more heat-absorbing pavement than whiter, wealthier parts of the same city.

…In the 1930s, the federal government graded different neighborhoods on their suitability for real estate investment. Race was a key factor: Black neighborhoods were…outlined in red and deemed unsuitable for housing loans and federal aid…. This redlining left a lasting mark…exacerbating segregation and racial inequalities….

…Across more than 100 U.S. cities, formerly redlined neighborhoods were 5 degrees hotter on average today than…[those] not redlined.

…Redlining transformed Black neighborhoods and left them with fewer parks and trees….

…Global warming won't affect everyone equally.

Heat waves are more dangerous for people living in older housing units that are harder to cool… who live near highways with high levels of pollution…and who don't have ready access to health care or healthy food….These factors have been deeply influenced by discriminatory housing… policies over many decades.

VIRUS OF CAPITALISM DESTROYS WORKERS' HEALTH

In hospitals and clinics across the city of Chicago, health care workers are fighting back against the capitalist bosses' racist and sexist attacks on our lives. They are boldly challenging capitalism's persistent need to prioritize profit over the needs of the working class.

The Covid-19 pandemic has claimed at least 3,000 lives in Chicago. Because of racist inequalities rooted in capitalism, it has been especially devastating to Black and Latin workers, who have made up at least 75 percent of the reported deaths (chicago.gov). Many of these Black and Latin working-class families are also disproportionately affected by gun violence and youth suicides, both of which have seen a drastic uptick this year (Chicago Sun Times, 7/25).

But instead of expanding access and the quality of care, the racist bosses take the opposite approach. They have accepted millions of dollars in handouts from the CARES Act while they threaten to close hospitals, cut back on services for workers who are unemployed or low-income, and impose wage freezes while denying protective gear for those on the front lines.

This deadly assault will continue to be the reality as long as we allow capitalism to exist. Relying on liberal politicians and union misleaders to lead our fightback will only prolong our misery, as these hacks only serve the system's needs.

More than ever, workers everywhere need to build the struggle to violently overthrow this racist profit system and replace it with a communist society that eliminates money, wages, and social classes. Under communism, we will collectively organize hospitals, clinics and public health based on workers' needs. To fight for our collective health, we need to join and build the international Progressive Labor Party (PLP).

Workers of the world, unite

Throughout the majority of 2020, there have been a number of battles that have flared up at local health care facilities, which have mobilized thousands of workers. Some of the notable struggles include:

Workers at Mount Sinai Hospital on the city's west side protesting the bosses' refusal to extend pandemic hazard pay to all employees, as well as a failure to make necessary infrastructure improvements to update failing equipment

Nurses, doctors and supporters fighting to prevent the closing of the Provident Hospital emergency room for an entire month during the Covid-19 surge

Health care workers across the city uniting to march through the Medical District in the wake of the racist kkkop murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, demanding a response from the bosses regarding chronic racist health inequalities

Hundreds of nurses at Amita St Joseph's Hospital in Joliet going on strike for over two weeks to protest against racist and sexist harassment by the bosses, who threatened to cut sick pay and freeze wages for new hires

Rallies and car caravans of hundreds to protest the proposed closure of Mercy Hospital in the Bronzeville neighborhood, the city's oldest hospital which serves mostly Black workers

A strike of thousands of workers at the University of Illinois Hospital (UIH), including nurses, aides, clerical and maintenance workers to demand better staffing, higher pay, and improved safety measures

Members of PLP have enthusiastically supported and even provided leadership to some of these anti-racist fights. We have distributed hundreds of flyers and issues of CHALLENGE newspaper to workers hungry for revolutionary politics.

In every struggle in which we have been involved, we have stressed the racist and sexist nature of how the bosses attack and divide us. We have pushed for our co-workers and friends to see themselves as a united fight against all of capitalism's attacks, and to organize for communist revolution as the antidote to this poisonous system.

Health care for profit is deadly

Health care systems under capitalism will always be organized as a business to maximize the bosses' profits. The destructive nature of the pandemic has shone a spotlight on just how inadequate, unequal, and racist the bosses' infrastructure really is.

Despite many hospitals being part of wealthy systems with assets in the billions, hospitals across the country have been closing at a rate of 30 per year (Bloomberg Business, 8/21/18). The majority of these closures occur in working-class urban and rural areas and have negatively impacted millions of Black, Latin and Asian workers, who increasingly find themselves living in "health care deserts" and are forced to travel longer distances to receive care. In Chicago, life expectancy for neighborhoods on the south and west sides can average thirty years less than wealthier downtown neighborhoods (NBC Chicago, 6/10/19)!

The loss of over half a million hospital beds in the U.S. since 1975 all but guaranteed that when a pandemic hit, capacity would be quickly overrun (Truthout, 3/31). As is the case in all industries under capitalism, from transit to education, the scramble for making short-term profits outweighed any long-term consideration of workers' safety or development.

On a local level, liberal bosses in Chicago have used decreasing tax revenue as an excuse to cut services and jobs to the publicly-funded Cook County Health System (Chicago Tribune, 8/28). This conveniently overlooks the fact that "progressive" Mayor Lori Lightfoot was willing to fork over $1 billion in tax money to developers just a year ago to build a new luxury neighborhood (WTTW, 9/4/19).

Beware the labor fakers

Many of the struggles against the hospital bosses have been organized by the unions, including Illinois Nurses Association (INA) and SEIU. As communists, we fight to organize within mass worker organizations and understand that strikes can be effective schools for class consciousness and communist politics. However, we must always be on guard to understand and challenge the ways that these liberal capitalist reformers sell out workers and steer the struggle into dead ends.

The INA, who are helping lead the ongoing strike at the University of Illinois Hospital, undoubtedly set the nurses in Joliet up to fail in their struggle (see CHALLENGE, 8/5). Along with SEIU, they are limiting the scope of the struggle to focus on negotiating a new contract. Workers "winning" a new contract isn't anything to be excited about; the majority of the time the bosses won't even honor the conditions! Labor contracts only dictate the terms of our exploitation.

Continued on page 6

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